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ABSTRACT

This action research project evaluated a program to reduce inappropriate behavior and maximize prosocial skills. The program involved development and implementation of cooperative learning, weekly prosocial lessons, a conflict resolution program, and a community service project. The target population consisted of 240 seventh and eighth grade middle school students in a rural agricultural community. The data collection strategies used to assess the program outcomes included a teacher observation checklist, before/middle/after social skills surveys from students, before/middle/after social skills surveys from teachers, office discipline referrals, teacher journals, discipline referrals to parents, and student reflection. Analysis of probable causes indicated that poor societal influences, unclear value focus, and breakdown of family structure negatively impact student behavior. Further, lack of educational focus on social skills and insufficient intrapersonal and interpersonal skills also contribute to problems in behavior. To determine the degree of change, researchers used surveys, checklists, observations, and administrative records to compare results with information gathered from the previous year. Post-intervention data indicated that direct instruction of prosocial skills, the provision of application opportunities, and the development of empathy awareness resulted in a decrease of inappropriate behavior. (Seven appendices include a Student Survey, a Conflict Resolution Unit, and the Teacher Observation List for Inappropriate Behaviors. Contains 23 references.) (JS)

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IMPROVING STUDENT SOCIAL SKILLS

ED 423 996

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for reducing inappropriate behavior and maximizing prosocial skills. The targeted population consists of seventh and eighth grade students in a middle school located in a rural, agricultural community. The problems of student misbehavior will be documented with behavior check lists, student and teacher surveys, teacher journals, and parent/office referrals.

Analysis of probable causes indicated that poor societal influences, unclear value focus, and breakdown of family structure were negatively impacting student behavior. Lack of educational focus on social skills and insufficient intrapersonal and interpersonal skills also contributed to problems in behavior.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the development of social skill curricular materials and implementation of instructional strategies. In addition opportunities to transfer prosocial skills were created and promoted.

Post intervention data indicated that direct instruction of prosocial skills, the provision of application opportunities, and the development of empathy awareness resulted in a decrease of inappropriate behavior.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The seventh and eighth grade students of the targeted middle school exhibit inappropriate behavior towards peers and adults. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes discipline referrals, increased conflict resolution sessions, teacher journal entries, and observations.

Immediate Problem Context

The targeted middle school population consists of 129 sixth grade students, 126 seventh grade students, and 114 eighth grade students, making a total of 369 students. The average class size for sixth grade is 25.8, seventh grade 25.2, and eighth grade 22.8. The ethnic make-up of the school population is 81.3% White students, 18.4% Mexican-American students, and 0.3% Asian/Pacific Islander students. Twenty percent of the student population is considered to be from low-income families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in foster homes with public funds, or eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches. Limited-English-Proficient students who have been found to be eligible for bilingual education make up 3.4% of the school population. The school had a 95.9% attendance rate for the previous school year with a 9.9% student mobility rate. Of the 385 students, 25

were considered chronic truants, constituting 6.5% of the total enrollment of the school.

The total number of faculty and staff employed by the district is 144: 5 are administrators, 69 are teachers (29 of whom teach in the targeted middle school), 24 are aides to teachers, and 27 are support personnel. The average years of teaching experience is 13.1, and the average for administrators is 21.2. The percentage of faculty with bachelor degrees is 70.9%, and those with master's and above is 29.1%. The racial background of the faculty is 99.3% White and .7% Mexican-American. Males make up 22.7% of the teacher population, while 77.3% are female (State School Report Card, 1996).

The school building consists of the original structure that was erected in 1956. An addition was completed in 1974. The structure is situated on seven and one-half acres in a residential area. It is a well-kept building that covers a total of 47,808 square feet. The middle school, located within the structure that also houses an elementary school, consists of 20 classrooms, a library, computer lab, and two gymnasiums. The gymnasiums are shared with the elementary school, but the library and computer lab are considered middle school facilities. The available space is both well utilized and limited. Resource teachers and the bilingual instructor share classroom space with regular education teachers. The computer lab, added in 1991, houses 30 IBM compatible computers and has access to the Internet. The lab is well utilized each day, often to capacity. The library offers a wide selection of leisure and resource reading materials. It also includes multi-media facilities.

The middle school program consists of core classes in reading, language, math, science, and social studies that utilize a quarterly system of grading. Exploratory classes rotate on a trimester basis and include art, home arts, and industrial arts. Core classes and exploratory classes meet 40 minutes daily. Each grade level has a team of teachers who meet daily for a preparation period. Also considered an exploratory class, physical education is taught daily to seventh and eighth graders. Sixth graders are taught health for one quarter and physical education the other three quarters. Nonathletic extracurricular programs from which students are able to choose are: science olympiad, rocket club, chorus, band, drama club, virtual yearbook committee, scholastic bowl, and student council. Athletic opportunities are available in the following areas: boys' and girls' track, boys' and girls' basketball, cheerleading, and girls' volleyball.

The special education system consists of both self-contained and resource programs. The structure of the resource program allows students to attend regular education classes with the assistance of a special education instructor.

The Surrounding Community

The school is located in a rural, agricultural community of 7,000 residents. Three smaller communities feed into the targeted school district. The town is ethnically diverse with an 88% White population and 12% are of Mexican descent (State School Report Card, 1996). Many of the Mexican residents originally came as seasonal farm workers but have since settled in the area. A summer migrant program is available to assist students of these families.

The median family income is $32,052. The per capita income is $11,449. The skilled and semi-skilled experienced labor force of the community has a record of stability. Fifteen industries employ 1,500 people (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990).

The community is located near major interstates and a rail system providing access to five larger cities. Fifteen churches represent 13 denominations. The community has a modern, well-equipped 72 bed medical surgical hospital with an addition currently being constructed. A newly-constructed library is located within blocks of the targeted middle school. Additional features of the community are a weekly newspaper, radio station, and two small airports located within 15 miles. Park and recreational facilities include two lakes, a civic center, nature areas, a community swimming pool, playground areas, ball diamonds, and four city parks. Currently, a sports complex is under construction (Mendota Chamber of Commerce, 1993).

The school district in which the targeted school is located has a total enrollment of 1,134. It consists of four schools: three of the elementary schools are pre-kindergarten through fifth grade; and the fourth is a middle school of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. There are two other school districts in the community: one is a K-8 parochial district and the other a 9-12 high school district. A community college is located within 20 minutes of the town.

The operating expenditure per pupil for the 1994-1995 school year was $4,505 for the district. The average teacher's salary was $31,546. Salaries include various monetary benefits and compensations, such as tax-sheltered annuities, retirement

benefits, bonuses, and extracurricular duty payments (State School Report Card, 1996).

A current social issue under consideration is the possibility of consolidating to a unit district consisting of the local high school and grade school districts. A second concern is the consolidation or possible annexation of a small, neighboring school district. Finally, it should be noted that the last referendum considered, proposed primarily to enlarge the smallest of the elementary schools, was put to a vote two years ago and failed.

National Context of the Problem

Today's home setting, demographics, parental status, and changes in society are reflected in the behavior and attitudes demonstrated by students. Schools must respond to the changes as they develop and influence the general student population to function at a level compatible with that of society. An assumption was once made that every child at school had a parent at home during the day. Television greatly fueled this assumption until the 1980s when many noticed that a change had taken place (Berliner & Casanova, 1996). The amount of quality time spent between a parent and his/her child averages fifteen minutes per day (McCabe & Rhoades, as cited by Costa, Bellanca & Fogarty, 1992). Increasing numbers of children are spending more and more hours in front of the television while the actual adult supervision, support, and direction is decreasing. This electronic baby-sitter effect is creating a negative influence on the minds of children (Bellanca, 1992).

Sociologists have documented increasing numbers of students who come from no-parent homes, single-parent homes, and dual working-parent homes. These types of home environments are becoming the norm as opposed to the exception. Sociologists have concluded that the effects of these different family situations influence student behavior in school. In addition, society's desire to separate religion from education has led public schools to create a value-empty educational setting (Bellanca, 1992).

McCabe and Rhoades (1992) stated that promoting self-esteem and personal/social responsibility is important. Such efforts will lead to students who appreciate their own worth, develop accountability, and acquire the skills needed to act responsibly towards others.

Psychologists have recently hypothesized that external punishment and reinforcement might change/modify a pupil's performance. A longer lasting correction in behavior could happen if the pupils themselves would internalize the reasons for appropriate behavior and reinforce themselves for appropriate social behavior (Manning, as cited by Berliner & Casanova, 1996).

Classroom lessons are of little value unless these lessons can be utilized and applied by students outside of the classroom setting. The goal of a thinking classroom is to build on learning by bridging the old with the new as well as coaxing students to transfer and utilize knowledge in both the academic and real-life scenarios (Bellanca, 1992).

"American education's greatest strength—or its most serious weakness, according to some assessments—is local control of schools" (Harris, as cited by Costa et al., 1992, p.4). Local school districts are best able to see the particular needs of its pupils. According to Harris (1992), such local control provides the chance that the values, aims, and needs of that particular community could be achieved, whereas a more removed system imposed on the school would fail to produce optimal results.

Today's parents, according to Harris (1992), need schools to not only educate their children but to care for them during the day. The schools, in general, continue to create schedules which do not take today's parental needs and routines into account.

Certain teacher behaviors and classroom practices have led to greater academic achievement but have failed to pay attention to the teaching and encouragement of the prosocial development of students. Students need to be taught the social skills that society currently values. Recent changes in business and industrial approaches lend themselves to embracing the concept of teamwork and cooperation as opposed to individual achievement (Battistch, Delucchi, Schaps, Solomon & Watson, as cited by Berliner & Casanova, 1996).

Children who receive training at home in etiquette, proper eating habits, conversational skills, and social conflict resolution are better able to benefit from school. Along with these, family stability, close friendships, and good neighborhoods allow for healthy growth and security for students (Clark, as cited by Berliner & Casanova, 1996).

"Social responsibility is a personal investment in the well-being of others and of the planet," said Sheldon Berman, president of Educators for Responsibility (McCabe & Rhoades, as cited by Costa et al., 1992, p.211).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

The following data illustrates the number of discipline incidences which were referred to the principal's office for resolution.

Table 1

Categories, Numbers, and Percentages of Discipline Referrals to Administration Sept. 1996 Through May 1997

Infraction	Number of Incidents	Percentage
Gang Clothing/Drawings	9	10%
Verbal Profanity	13	14%
General Profanity	11	12%
Threat to Staff	1	1%
Hands on Substitute	1	1%
Patrol Duty	1	1%
Note Forgery	1	1%
Fighting	34	33%
Squirt Gun Use	1	1%
Skipping Class	1	1%
Medicine/Drug Use	2	2%
Poor Behavior	16	17%
Theft	1	1%
Bus Problem	1	1%
Fire Alarm	1	1%

Of the 240 students in the targeted group, 33% of the students exceeded step number four of the school discipline policy and were sent to the principal's office for a variety of infractions. Of these infractions, violations were most concentrated in the area of student-to-student misbehaviors.

It should be noted that the actual number of infractions is actually much greater than these data reflect. Most inappropriate behaviors are dealt with within the classroom setting and never reach the administrative level. The data presented in Table 1 are illustrated in Figure 1.

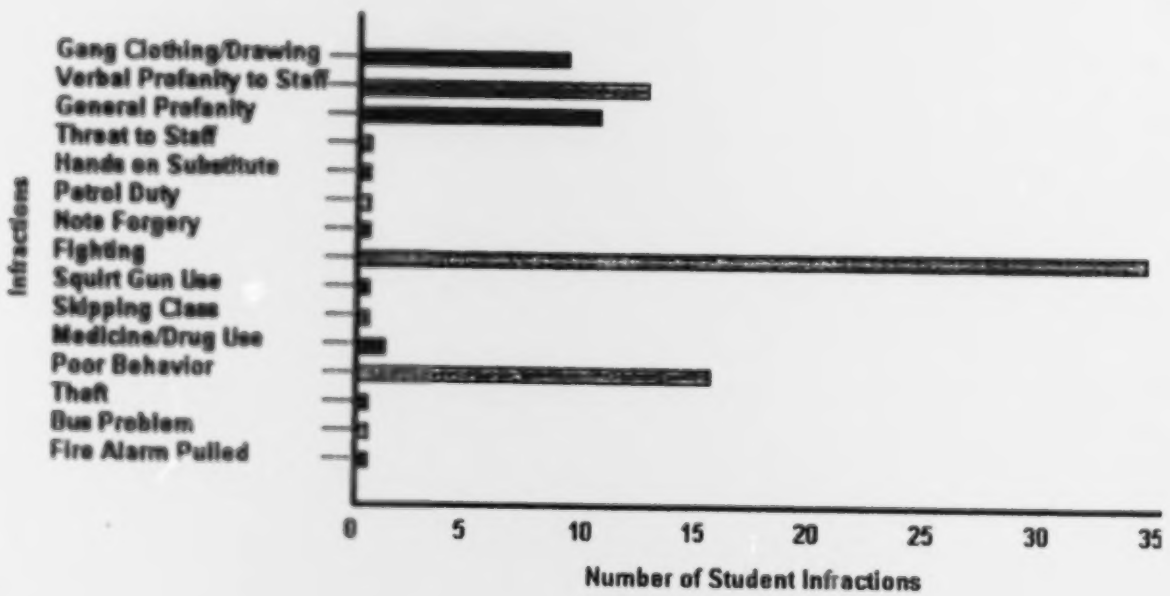

Figure 1. Categories and numbers of discipline referrals to administration Sept. 1996 through May 1997.

Table 2 illustrates the results of data collected regarding consequences of the aforementioned discipline referrals.

Table 2

Categories, Numbers, and Percentages of Consequences Implemented by Administration Resulting From Referrals Sept. 1996 Through May 1997

Consequence	Number of Incidents	Percentage
In-school Suspension	106	42%
Out-of-school Suspension	37	15%
Student Assistance Program (SAP)	5	2%
Office Detentions	13	5%
Parent Conference with Principal	1	.004%
Saturday School	62	25%
Conflict Resolution	23	9%
School Cleanup	1	.004%
Reimburse School	2	.008%

Students from the targeted group who violate school policy are often removed from the normal school setting. Consequences that result in addressing and/or resolving the conflict are few in number. The data suggest that problems are not solved by past methods. The data presented in Table 2 are illustrated in Figure 2.

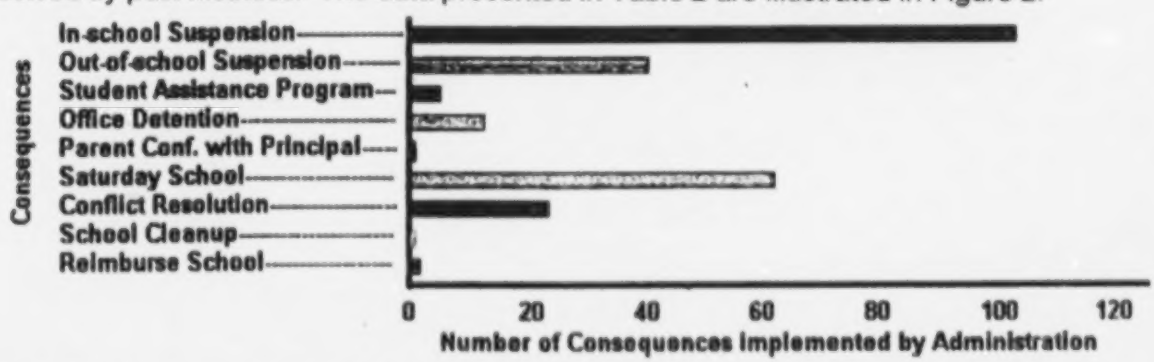

Figure 2. Categories and numbers of consequences implemented by administration Sept. 1996 through May 1997.

Data regarding perceptions of social skill deficiencies were collected first through the use of student surveys. A sample of this survey can be found in Appendix A. Figure 3 illustrates the results of the first question. Students were asked to comment on the frequency of the behaviors tested.

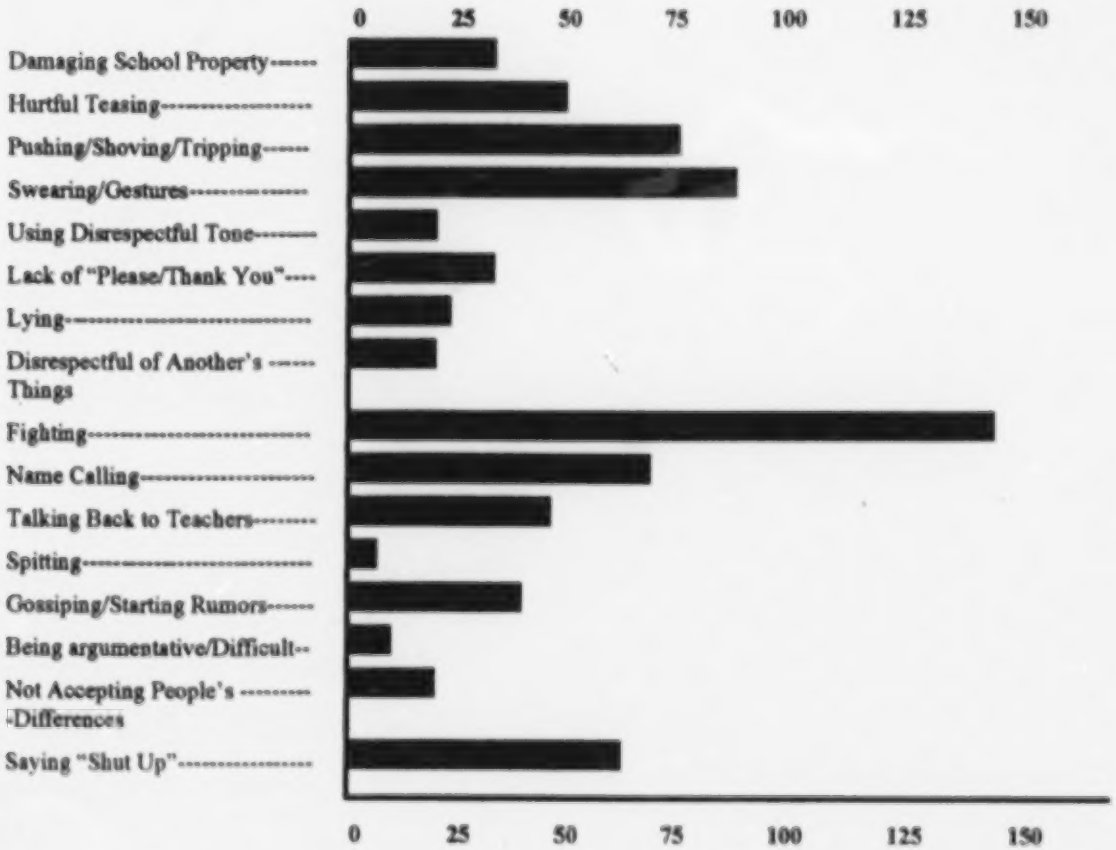

Figure 3. Categories and numbers of student responses to student pre-survey Sept. 1997.

The students' overwhelming viewpoint of fighting as the behavior that occurred most often may be an indicator of the reaction by faculty to take consistent, immediate action. Whereas behaviors such as gossiping or a disrespectful tone may be handled differently from teacher to teacher, fighting unconditionally results in the participants being sent to the principal's office. The extreme nature of the incident not only draws more attention, but the increase in police involvement in recent years has caused fighting to have an even greater impact on the student body.

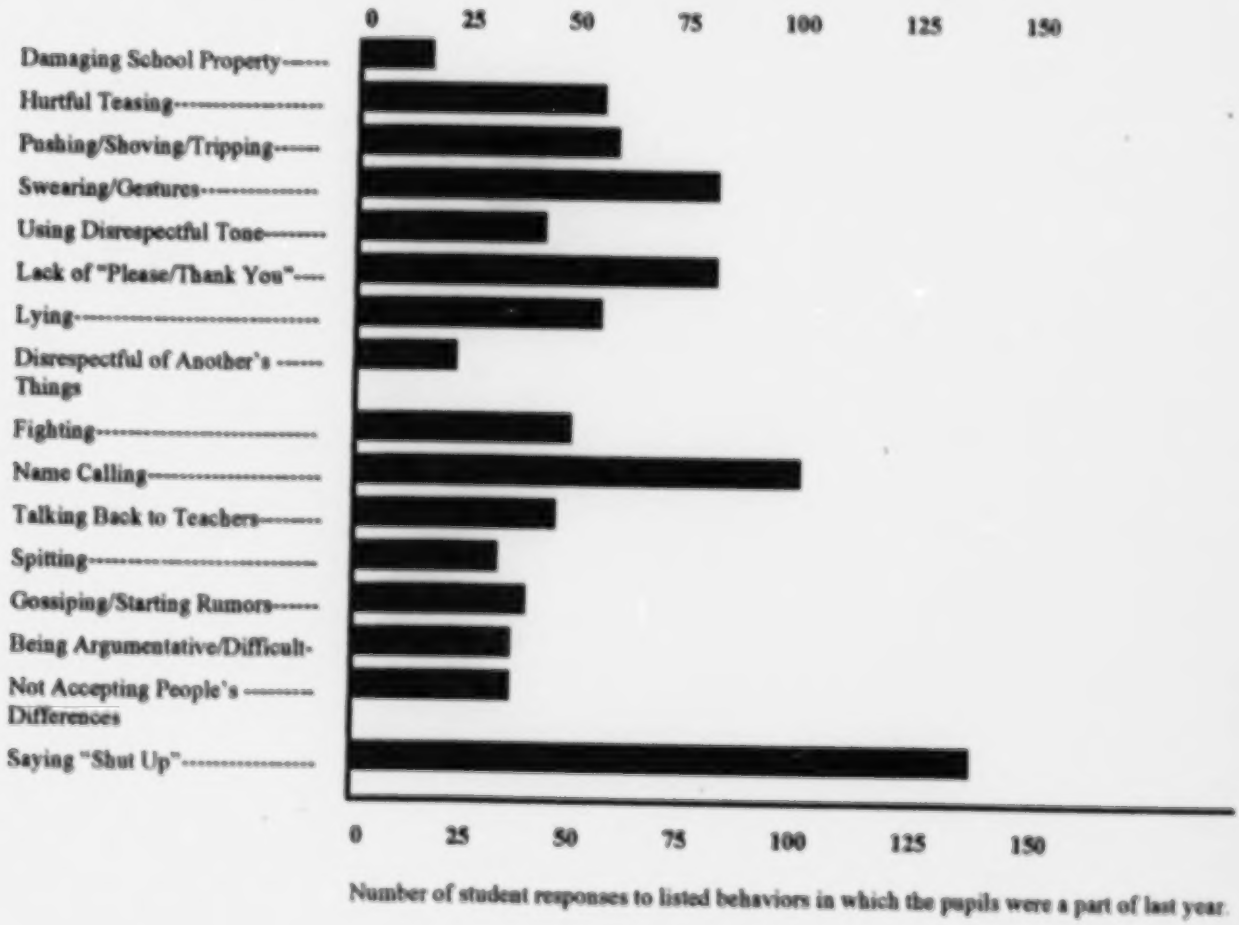

Figure 4. Categories and numbers of student responses to student pre-survey Sept. 1997.

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Figure 4 illustrates the results of question two. In Figure 3 fighting was perceived by the students as occurring most often among the behaviors. Ironically, Figure 4 illustrates that only one-third of the student body claimed to have engaged in physical fighting.

A series of questions was asked regarding students' perceptions of how student behavior and the noncompliance with school rules is handled by the faculty. As the data in Figure 5 illustrate, over two-thirds of the students feel confident with teachers' ability to deal with misbehaviors. After further examination, the researchers discovered that the fourth statement could have two different interpretations thereby affecting its higher percentage of disagreement responses. The intended meaning required that students were to rate how fairly rules are applied to all students. However, students could have interpreted the statement as asking them to rate the degree to which students uphold the rules at all times.

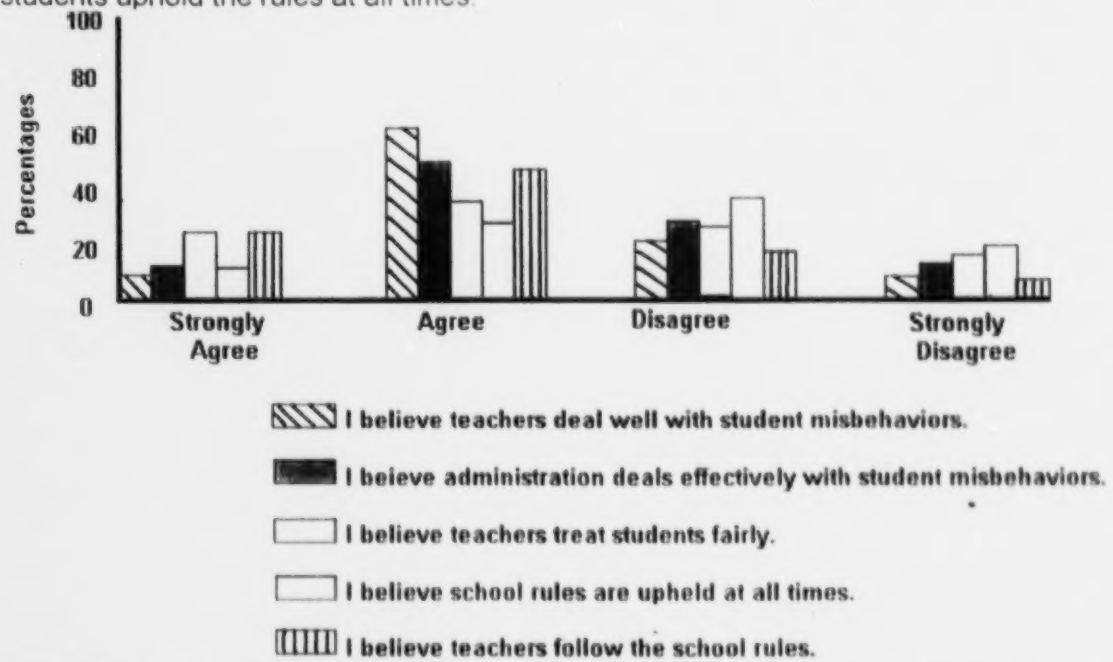

Figure 5. Categories and percentages of student responses to student pre-survey Sept. 1997.

Teachers also completed a shortened version of the student survey (Appendix B). They were asked to indicate the three most frequently observed misbehaviors from the previous school year. Out of the 57 votes, the areas of concern were: not accepting people's differences, hurtful teasing/injuring feelings, using a disrespectful tone, and fighting. When asked to recommend specific social skills they thought should be targeted, almost half of the 19 teachers felt that accepting people's differences warranted attention. Almost one-fourth of the teachers felt a need to focus on the problem of fighting. Other votes were scattered among respect for others, manners, and hurtful teasing.

The graphic organizer in Figure 6 effectively illustrates the differences and common ground between teacher and student responses.

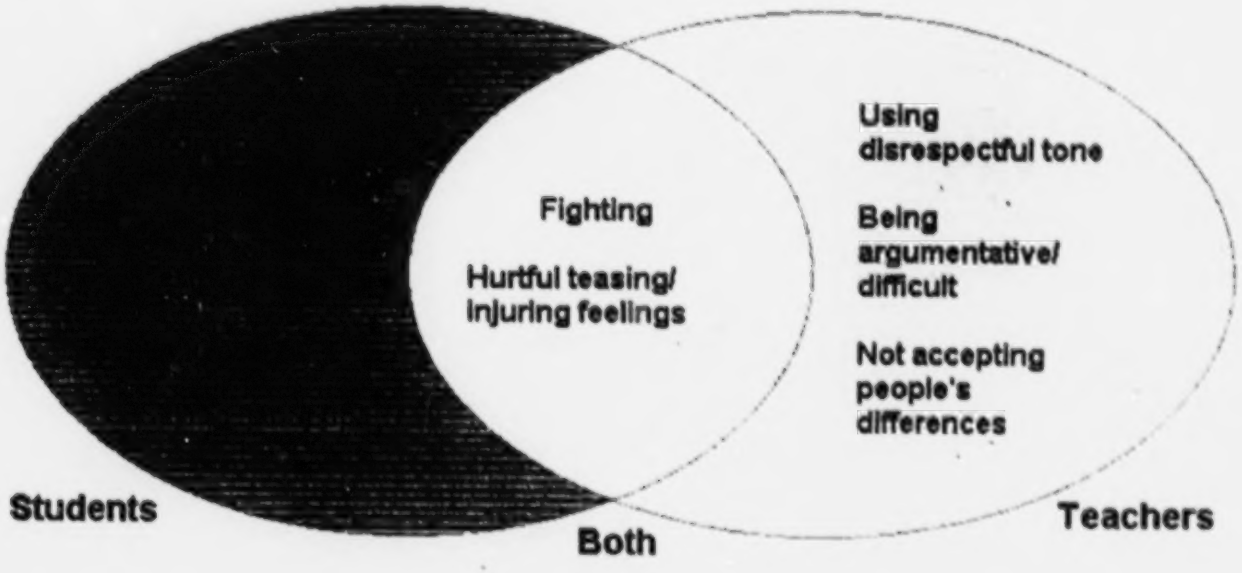

Figure 6. Misbehavior areas of most concern from students, teachers, and both students and teachers from Sept. 1997 pre-surveys.

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Data collected in Figure 7 show where teachers and students feel misbehaviors occur most often on the physical plant. When students are under teacher supervision, misbehaviors are infrequent. Most misbehaviors occur in crowded hallways where infractions can easily be concealed from teachers. It is interesting to note that the only sizable agreement in perception occurs on the grounds outside after school. This shows that school staff are unaware of many infractions post school hours.

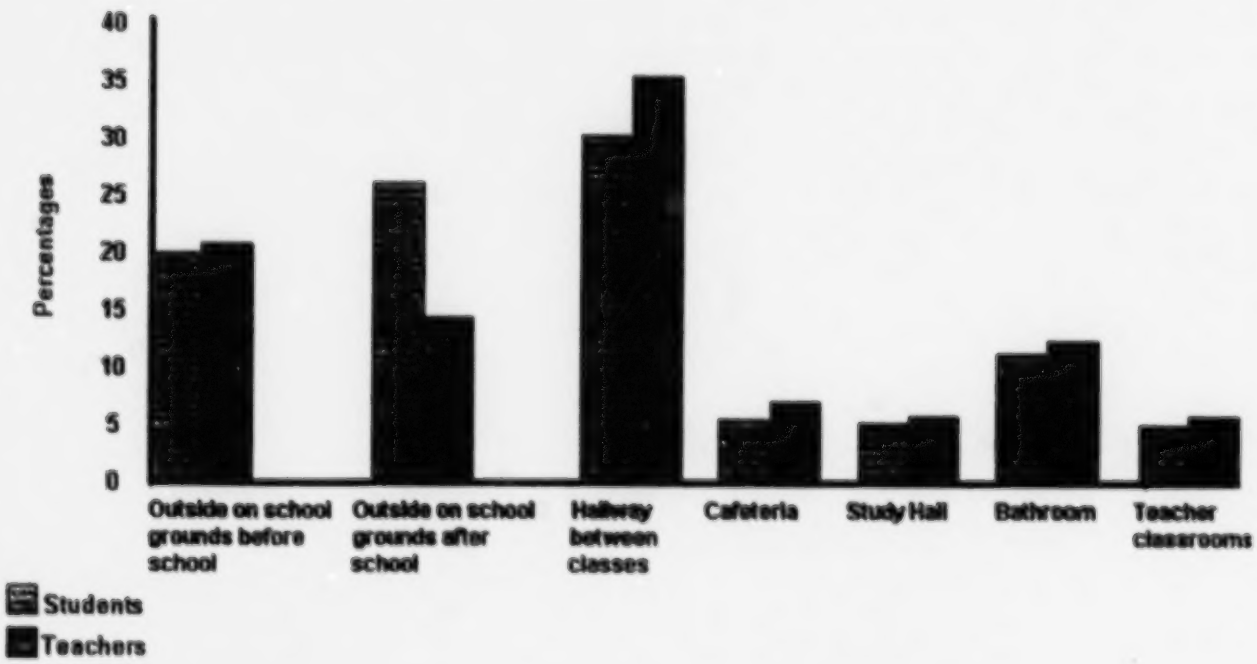

Figure 7. Categories and percentages of student and teacher responses to the pre-survey (Sept. 1997) question , "Where do most school misbehaviors occur?"

Probable Causes

The site and literature suggest that changes in the targeted students' environment, home, community, school, intrapersonal skills, and society in general have adversely affected students' prosocial skills.

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The targeted students face the challenge of growing up in what one expert called a "socially toxic environment" (Garbarino, 1997). As Garbarino has defined it "...the social context in which they [children] grow up has become poisonous to their development-just as toxic substances in the environment threaten human well-being and survival." Improper role models, negative media influences, exposure to violence, gangs, and drugs as well as a breakdown of the home environment have resulted in gaps in prosocial development and an increase of anti-social behavior.

Children look to role models, whether famous or personally known, for direction, guidance, inspiration, and sometimes hope. In our increasingly aggressive culture, those qualities that might have been condemned in the past as inappropriate or rude are perceived as admirable, or at the very least, acceptable. Athletes, political leaders, and entertainment figures frequently display offensive language, unhealthy lifestyles, lack of values, and even criminal acts. Vulnerable adolescents who aspire to emulate such role models tend to practice the image portrayed to the public, not distinguishing between character flaws and positive traits.

With the increase of electronic supervision, reports indicate that children are exposed to a frighteningly high number of violent acts stemming from movies, television sitcoms, dramas, and cartoons to name a few. In addition, messages in popular music suggest violent solutions to problems. "Shock radio," which thrives on the disregard for social boundaries, has drawn a large audience. Even the evening news bombards viewers with stories of violence often exploiting the gruesome details. The media available to our youth is literally saturated with examples of anti-social behavior.

The rise in our youth's gravitation toward gangs and the casting off of parental authority rules, opting instead to establish their own codes of behavior, coincides with their increase of drug use. Universally accepted social rules do not apply in this "sub-society" of their own design. In the broad scope of this serious situation, social

skills training almost seems to be a non-issue. Ironically, this could be the root of the entire problem.

It is widely believed by many that the everyday interactions children have with their parents are paramount to their development of social skills (Cohn, Patterson, & Christopolous, 1991; Parke & Ladd, 1992 as cited by Mize & Abell, 1996). Unfortunately, some studies report a 50 percent decrease over the past 30 years in the amount of time parents are spending with their children in constructive activities (Garbarino, 1997). This lack of parental supervision and guidance coupled with a breakdown of the family unit and/or an undefined family value focus has resulted in children who display low levels of social competence.

An informal survey of students from the targeted group revealed that, aside from parental attendance at sporting events and formal vacations, students spend little time with their parents. Mealtime, once a time for gathering around the table and conversation between children and their parents, is nearly obsolete. Now, often accompanied by the noise of a television, it is a hurried affair or one in which family members eat in shifts. The result of either scenario is that the time spent in the development of prosocial skills is lost.

Another negative influence that many of the targeted students must battle is the increase in the movement of students between neighborhoods, communities, and even countries. This increased mobility produces an instability that adversely affects the students. Parents, in search of jobs, affordable housing, or as a result of the dissolution of the traditional family unit, inadvertently place additional stress upon the children. This stress and instability can interfere with students' ability to acquire and maintain prosocial skills. The difficulty in establishing and maintaining relationships with peers and adults may also manifest itself in disruptive behaviors or even complete withdrawal from various social settings such as school.

As well as academic learning opportunities, today's youth need social and emotional learning opportunities. It is well documented that one's emotional intelligence is a more important predictor of one's success in life than is a high I.Q. In addition, some students need social skills training to derive maximum benefit from academic instruction (Williams, Walker, Holmes, Todis & Fabre, 1989 as cited by Warger & Rutherford, 1993).

Unfortunately, the targeted group's opportunities for social and emotional learning and development are limited. While some teachers at the targeted school utilize cooperative learning in their classrooms, it is the exception rather than the norm. The conflict resolution program that was in place was not actively utilized during the past school year, not because of a lack of conflicts, but rather due to teacher dissatisfaction with the program. Aside from a list posted in each classroom regarding assertive discipline procedures and a section in the student handbook regarding unacceptable social behaviors, little information or instruction is provided to the targeted group in the area of prosocial skills. A lack of formal training along with the perception that academic instructional time would be sacrificed has discouraged teachers from offering social as well as emotional learning opportunities. In addition, active parental involvement, so key to the development of a child's emotional and social growth, begins to taper off during the middle school years. One need only compare the number of middle school parents attending a function such as an open house to the number of elementary parents attending the same function.

Finally, children--especially older children such as those in the targeted group--are conscious of the contradictions of the values in the adult world. The do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do mentality of many adults leaves young people with an unclear value focus. As educators we focus upon preparing students to become responsible,

caring, and contributing members of society but offer limited opportunities for their emotional and social development.

The way that students think or feel about others and themselves can also greatly affect their use of social skills. Intrapersonal issues contributing to a decrease in social skills are lack of empathy, lack of self-discipline, and failure/inability to read social cues.

A positive correlation has been noted between the use of empathy and overall prosocial behavior (Barnett, Howard, Melton, & Dino, 1982 as cited by McCafferty, 1990). Due to the popular misconception that empathy is an innate skill, students traditionally do not receive formal training in this area. Yet, as stated by Barreth & Berman (1997), "...the missing piece in prevention programs is character development through the skills of empathy and self-discipline." Developing self-discipline gives children the ability to take appropriate action, delay action, or forego gratification in order to uphold selected values or goals.

For a number of children, social deficits stem from a general insensitivity to response cues. They demonstrate difficulty in waiting, delaying impulses, and keeping interest. Children with attention deficit disorder (ADD) are particularly prone to this.

Professional researchers and the on-site researchers agree that the students' lack of prosocial skills is the result of a variety of factors. These factors include negative social influences, changes in the traditional home, school, and community as well as a decrease or lack of intrapersonal skills.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

In the past social skills training focused on students who had an identified behavior disorder. As teachers acknowledge an overall deficiency in students' social skills, prosocial instruction is being increasingly infused into the general curriculum.

Appropriate social skills are necessary not only for a healthy learning environment but also for effective interactions in everyday life. The prosocial spectrum ranges from acts of common courtesy such as the use of "please" and "thank you" to skills used in avoiding or diffusing a potentially violent situation. It would seem that today's adolescent world uses the former very sparingly and has an increasing number of opportunities in which to use the latter.

Prosocial skills must be taught in such a way that they are transferred to students' everyday lives. A variety of approaches must be used rather than focusing on a single method that may not reach some students. The students must feel that there is relevance in learning and using the skills taught in school.

Although a variety of approaches were presented in the research articles, there were no contradictions among the basic principles upon which each program was built. After a thorough examination of the research literature, the on-site researchers found common solution strategies that are integral components for the foundation of social skill development. They can be categorized into the areas of direct instruction,

modeling, empathy/self-discipline training, and providing opportunities for practice and transfer.

One of the first steps used in developing a social skills program is to list and prioritize the desired skills and to teach them through direct instruction. According to Carter and Sugai, 1989, teaching methods that are effective in academics are also productive in social skill training. Direct instruction skills can cover topics such as teasing, decision-making, being fair, and listening. This teaching method lends itself well to situations where students are learning new skills rather than simply reinforcing old ones. Because it is important for children to actually read cues and perceive their social interactions (Quinn, Jannasch-Pennel & Rutherford, 1995), strategies need to be taught for them to do so and to adjust their behavior accordingly. Direct instruction is the building block from which the other social skills teaching strategies stem. Once the students are taught a skill, teachers can utilize other methods (i.e. role playing, conferencing, etc.) to reinforce and foster transference of that skill.

It has been noted that students learn new social skills more easily when direct instruction is used in conjunction with modeling (Bandura, 1974 as cited by Kain, Downs, & Black, 1988). The teacher initially models the desired behavior. Modeling is not left solely to teachers, however. Students, particularly those at the middle school level, look to their peers rather than their teachers for social models. Therefore, although teachers may be the strongest examples of the desired behavior, it is essential that peers are provided as models also (Maag & Webber, 1995).

Effective modeling includes the demonstration of empathy (McCafferty, 1990). Empathy allows appreciation for the viewpoints and feelings of others. Even though empathy is a significant prosocial skill, it is an essential component absent from many

current social skill programs (Berreth & Berman, 1997). Empathy is considered to be one of the most important facets of moral development (Moyer, 1993). When empathy is encouraged, the results are children who behave prosocially among their peers (Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, & King, 1979, as cited by Mize & Abell, 1996). The ultimate goal of empathy training is achieving the abstract concept of "walking a mile in another's shoes." At the very least, it would provide a foundation for a cooperative environment by increasing students' understanding and tolerance of others.

In order for the skills that are taught and learned to be fully developed, students must have the opportunities to practice these skills on a daily basis. Transference of prosocial skills is encouraged through practice in various places and times (Warger & Rutherford, 1993). It is not merely enough to teach students to behave in a prosocial manner if they can't utilize those skills outside the traditional school setting; therefore, it is important that students are provided with the opportunity to actively participate in well-developed social service programs. Students need to know that their behaviors and actions are of equal importance. School-based community service programs offer students just such an opportunity. Young people must have meaningful roles in the life of the community if they are to develop positive social skills and a sense of self-worth (Hall, 1991). Young people need to be seen as citizens whose contributions are valued, needed, respected, and acknowledged (Nathan & Kielsmeier, 1991). "According to a recent poll (1991), 90% of 14- to 17-year olds who had been asked to volunteer did so," (Kennedy, 1991, p.772). Such a statistic illustrates that young people eagerly become involved in community service projects if the opportunity is provided for them.

If we systematically instruct students in the area of social skills, the efforts will be repaid by freeing youth to become independent, aspiring, successful individuals.

Students will use these skills as life tools to benefit both themselves and the society in which they live.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of using social skill instruction, during the period of September 1997 to December 1997, the seventh and eighth grade students from the targeted middle school will increase their ability to use prosocial skills with peers and adults, as measured by teacher journals, observation checklists, discipline referrals to parents and office, and surveys by teachers and students.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Curricular materials and instructional strategies that foster social skills in seventh and eighth grades will be developed and utilized.
2. Activities will be implemented to create a school/community environment that is conducive to prosocial behavior.
3. Opportunities will be provided in which students will engage in learning activities that develop, utilize, and internalize prosocial behaviors.

Project Action Plan

Who: The seventh and eighth grade classes with approximately 240 students total will be the targeted group for the action research.

Where: The action research will be implemented in seventh and eighth grade classrooms, Teacher Assistance Programs (TAP)/study halls in the middle school, and the surrounding community.

Process Statement One

What: Conflict Resolution (Direct Instruction/Mini-course)
Will include: -role playing
-self-esteem activities
-problem solving
-modeling
-empathy training

When: 30 minutes -Five days per week
-Two weeks
-During TAP (study hall)

Why: -To prevent/decrease frequency of future conflicts
-To offer tools/skills for negotiating/mediating
-To promote prosocial skills
-To foster good decision-making
-To create an environment of cooperation

Process Statement Two

What: Social Skill Instruction (Direct Instruction)
Will include: -whole class instruction
-cooperative learning groups
-modeling
-problem solving
-teaching for near/far transfer
-conflict resolution follow-up

When: -One class weekly
-One semester
-During classroom instruction in language arts and science - grade eight
language arts and math - grade seven

Why: -To reduce inappropriate behavior
-To promote prosocial skills
-To foster good decision-making skills
-To create an environment of cooperation
-To offer opportunities for transfer

Process Statement Three

What: School-based/Community Service
Will include: service projects around school and grounds
school-directed community involvement project
partnership development with existing service organizations

When: Quarterly project (on-going)
40 minutes per 2 weeks
One semester

Why: -To unite students and faculty toward a positive goal
-To foster "team spirit"
-To provide opportunities to practice prosocial skills

Process Statement Four

What: Discipline
Will include: -determining classroom rules, routines, and procedures
-teaching and practicing classroom rules, routines, and procedures
-the first few days of school
-evaluating knowledge and mastery of classroom rules and routines

When: Begins on the first day of school and is on-going

Why: -To establish consistent limits and consequences
-To minimize classroom disruptions
-To support positive teacher/student relations
-To promote self-control

Methods of Assessment

The data collection strategies used to assess the results of the implementation include a teacher observation checklist, before/middle/after social skills surveys from students, before/middle/after social skills surveys from teachers, office discipline referrals, teacher journals, discipline referrals to parents, and student reflection.

The teacher observation checklist will be utilized by the teachers carrying out the implementation. Surveys will be used to illustrate attitudes and feelings of both students and teachers during the beginning, middle, and final stages of the implementation. Referrals to the office will be monitored and noted. Such referrals include suspensions, of different types and lengths. Referrals to parents are carried out through the school Assertive Discipline Plan. Students reflections will take place orally, in written form, or as a whole class discussion. Each of the teachers

implementing the plan will maintain a teacher journal documenting such things as successes, failures, and changes that were instituted during the intervention.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to reduce inappropriate behavior and maximize prosocial skills. This was done through the development and implementation of a conflict resolution program, cooperative learning, weekly prosocial lessons, and a community service project.

Implementation of the social skills program began with a two-week conflict resolution unit. Teacher and student surveys were administered to determine from both perspectives the misbehaviors that have existed in our school, the degree of concern, and the locations where the misbehaviors most often occurred. The results provided direction in designing the most effective prosocial lesson plans and activities.

The initial two-week conflict resolution program was implemented during the teacher-assisted period (TAP) in the seventh and eighth grade classrooms. There were four main areas of focus: awareness and understanding of the elements of conflict, acceptable reactions to conflict, coping strategies for anger and stress, and understanding and tolerance of differing viewpoints. These concepts were addressed through a variety of instructional methods. Prosocial skills were taught through direct instruction while practice reinforcements were facilitated through cooperative learning and role playing.

Weekly lesson plans encompassed the following topics: resolving conflicts, cooperative learning, self-esteem, tolerance, and promoting interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Lesson plans varied between seventh and eighth grade teachers regarding times at which each skill was taught and the degree to which each was addressed depending upon the need determined within each grade level.

Conflict resolution was incorporated within the cooperative learning setting. Before cooperative learning actually took place, necessary skills were taught through direct instruction which included resolving conflict within a group. To reinforce prior concepts introduced during the initial conflict resolution program, T-charts were created to examine what working with a group looks and sounds like. Students quickly became aware that often disagreements would arise, and discussions were held as to how these could be resolved in a productive manner through listening, understanding different perspectives, compromising, and respecting the diversity of opinions. Lesson plans devoted to some of these skills can be found in Appendix C. Once discussed, these skills were first practiced and then applied within academic activities. Additional conflict resolution skills were then individually addressed on an as needed basis.

To address the concept of cooperative learning, a team approach was taken focusing on acceptance of roles, contribution/responsibility to a group, task completion within time constraints, and reaching a consensus. For example, in order to practice these skill, a "Run-See-Do" activity was utilized. Roles were assigned, and students were instructed to create a poster that replicated a pre-designed model. In order to complete this task, students had to utilize their visual perceptions, communication skills, and cooperative teamwork concepts. For specific instructions regarding this activity, see Appendix D. In addition, to apply the skills academically, students completed a writing activity in cooperative teams. Students were provided with the first sentence of what was to become a descriptive paragraph. Team members silently

passed the paper around the group each adding a sentence based on the information the previous members gave. Members were responsible for clarity, cohesion, acceptance of others' ideas, thoroughness of description, and completion of a final product that focused on a single topic.

Self esteem was addressed during the process of cooperative learning activities. Opportunities were provided for students to become aware of their individual importance in a team effort. According to the cooperative learning guidelines that were previously taught, each individual was the recipient of encouraging comments. In addition, activities specifically designed to elevate student self-esteem were implemented. To illustrate, the "Web of Friendship" and "One Good Thing" activities were utilized in order to increase student awareness of their positive attributes as seen by their peers. The "Web of Friendship" provided an opportunity for students to orally offer and receive genuine compliments from peers regarding positive personality traits, gifts, and talents. This same basic idea was presented in the "One Good Thing" activity but in written form. A sample of the product received by a student can be found in Appendix E.

Exposure to the concept of empathy was literature-based. Through carefully chosen reading selections, situations were presented that allowed students to develop sensitivity, awareness, and tolerance of diverse viewpoints and differences as they exist in society. For instance, a piece entitled "Little by Little" by Jean Little was an autobiographical account of growing up with a disability. She was often the victim of cruel teasing by classmates because of her crossed eyes and thick glasses. The story further explains how she overcame her adversities by becoming the author of many books. Students were instructed to reflect upon the story and were required to empathize with her situation by explaining the difference between hurtful and playful teasing, how teasing feels, and their past experiences with teasing.

In the short story "The Moves Make the Man" by Bruce Brooks, a young African-American boy learns how perceptions that are based on pre-conceived ideas, misinformation, or a lack of information can lead to inaccurate assumptions. A series of related activities (Appendix E) required students to think further about the dangers of making judgments without adequate information.

Interpersonal skills were developed and practiced through a variety of cooperative learning activities. Intrapersonal skills were addressed through frequent journal entries and reflective questioning techniques.

Students participated in a project to help them link their school community to the outside community, thus, reinforcing the concept of civic responsibility. This project, "Links to the Community," was organized by student council representatives and the school's Future Homemakers of America (FHA). Student council members sold paper strips to construct paper chains. Each link of the chain represented twenty-five cents or a canned food item. These chains symbolized the school's link to the surrounding community. Food items and a portion of the money were donated to the local food pantry while the remaining money was donated to the school's library for the purchase of accelerated reader books. At the conclusion of the two-week fund raising event, a celebration was held during the student's TAP period. Students played basketball, danced, and listened to music. Parents from the school's parent volunteer organization served treats that were baked by the FHA.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The purpose of implementing this program was to increase prosocial skills and reduce inappropriate behaviors. To determine the degree of change, researchers used surveys, checklists, observations, and administrative records to compare results with information gathered from the previous year. (It should be taken into consideration that

the results shown in Figures 8 and 9 compare information gathered from a 9 month period to that of a 4 month period.)

Figure 8 illustrates the changes in behavior according to administrative records. Most misbehaviors reported to the principal appear to be similar in frequency to the previous year when considering five months of the school year remain. Exceptions to these are "Verbal Profanity to Staff" and "Fighting." The most significant drop was in the broad category of "Poor Behavior."

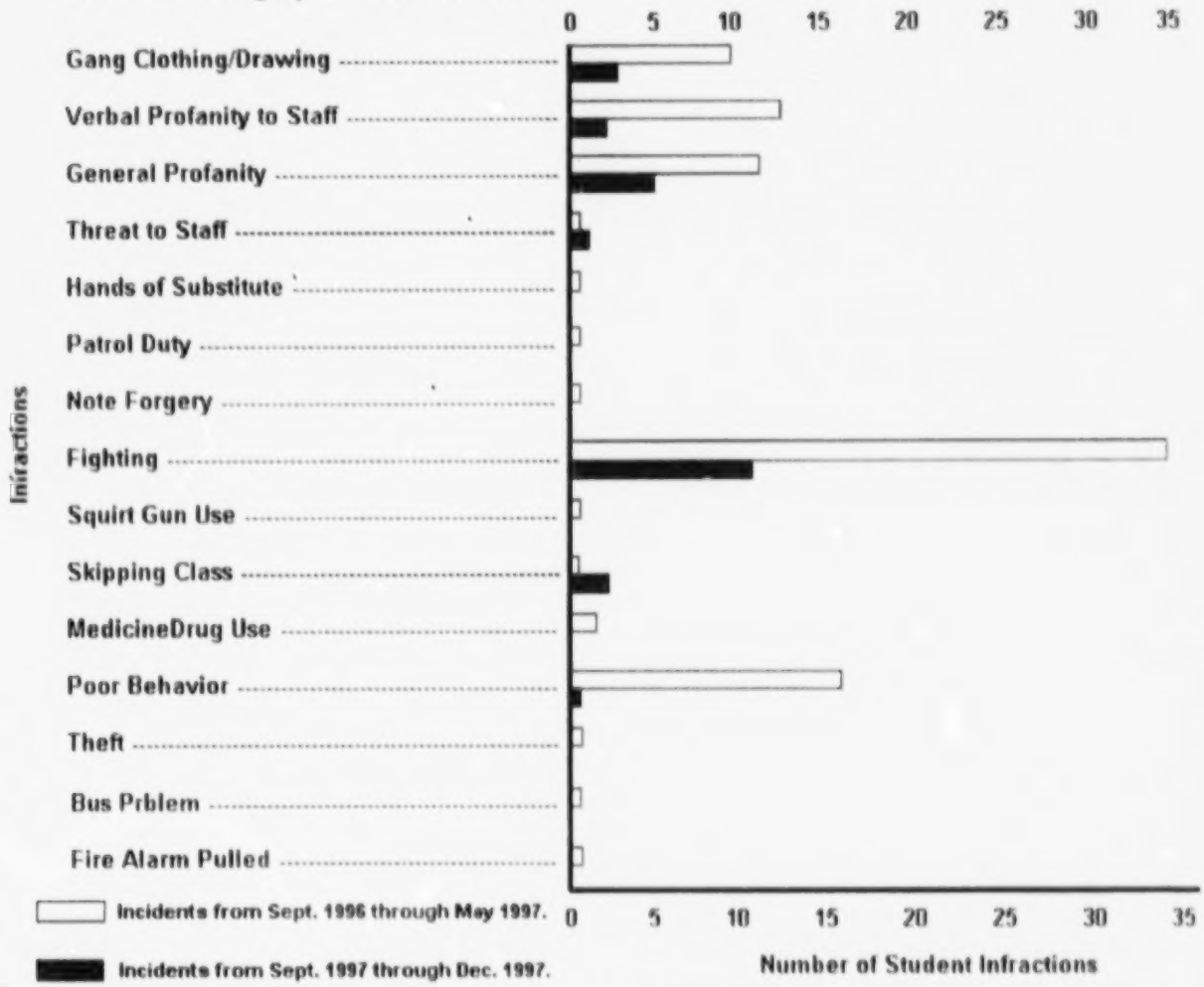

Figure 8. Categories and numbers of discipline referrals to administration Sept. 1996 through May 1997 and Sept. 1997 through Dec. 1997.

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Table 3

Categories, Numbers, and Percentages of Consequences Implemented by Administration Resulting From Referrals Sept. 1997 Through Dec. 1997

Consequence	Number of Incidents	Percentage
In-school Suspension	55	60%
Out-of-school Suspension	17	19%
Student Assistance Program (SAP)	2	2%
Office Detentions	5	5%
Parent Conference with Principal	0	0%
Saturday School	13	13%
Conflict Resolution	0	0%
School Cleanup	0	0%
Reimburse School	0	0%

Table 3 illustrates the results of data collected regarding consequences of the aforementioned discipline referrals. The data presented in Table 3 are illustrated in Figure 9.

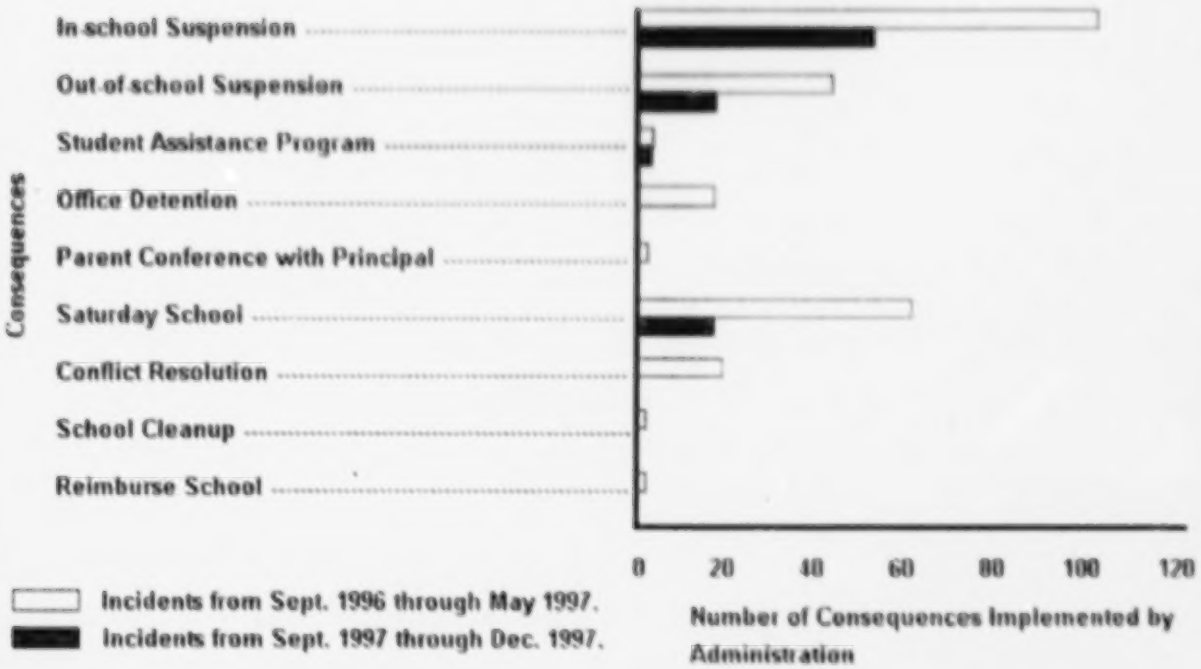

Figure 9. Categories and numbers of consequences implemented by administration Sept. 1996 through May 1997 and Sept. 1997 through Dec. 1997.

Figure 9 shows that in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and Student Assistance Program (SAP) referrals appear to be comparable to the previous year when considering five months remain in the school year. However, the number of Saturday schools decreased dramatically. It should be noted that because of the changes in the school discipline policy and the installment of the two-week conflict resolution unit at the beginning of the school year, the after-school conflict resolution classes were eliminated.

Results displayed in Figure 10 show that student perceptions of the frequency of social skill deficiencies on the pre- and post-surveys remained unchanged in most categories. However, the number of fights as perceived by students significantly decreased. "Gossiping/Rumors" and "Argumentative/Difficult" were areas perceived as having increased.

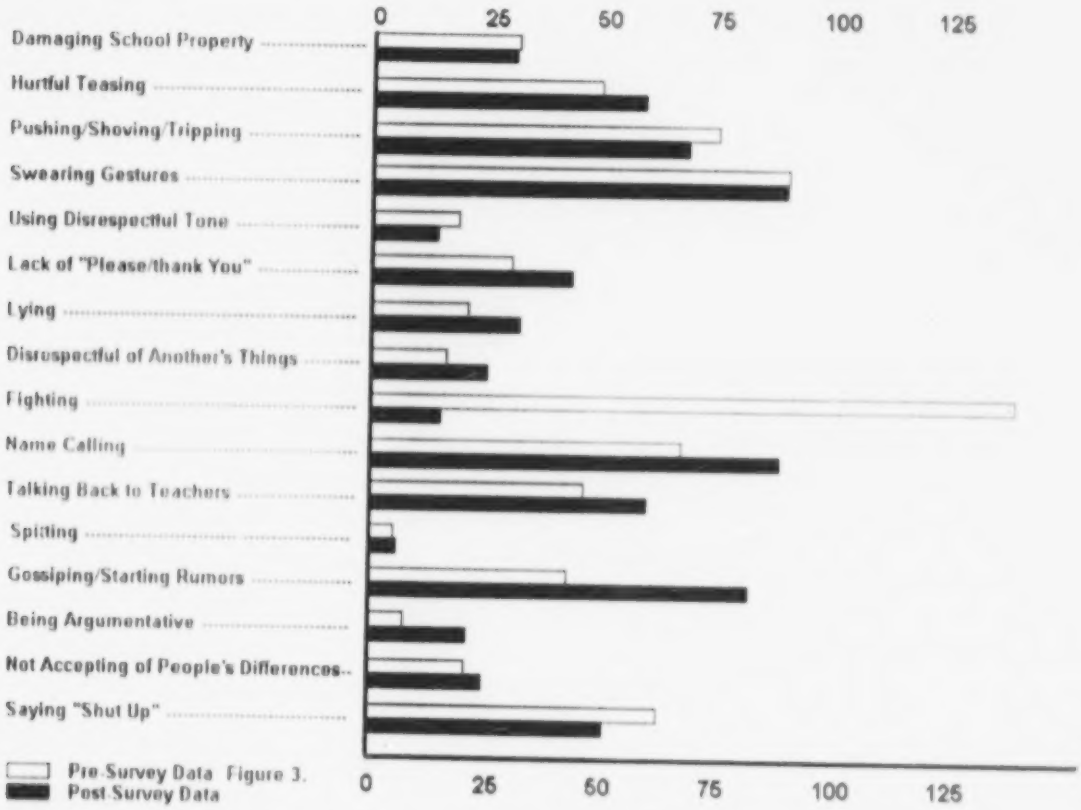

Figure 10. Categories and numbers of student responses to student pre-survey Sept 1997 and post-survey Dec 1997.

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Figure 11 demonstrates the students' admitted participation in misbehavior until this point in the school year versus their degree of participation the previous year. "Gossiping" and "Hurtful Teasing" were the only areas of increase.

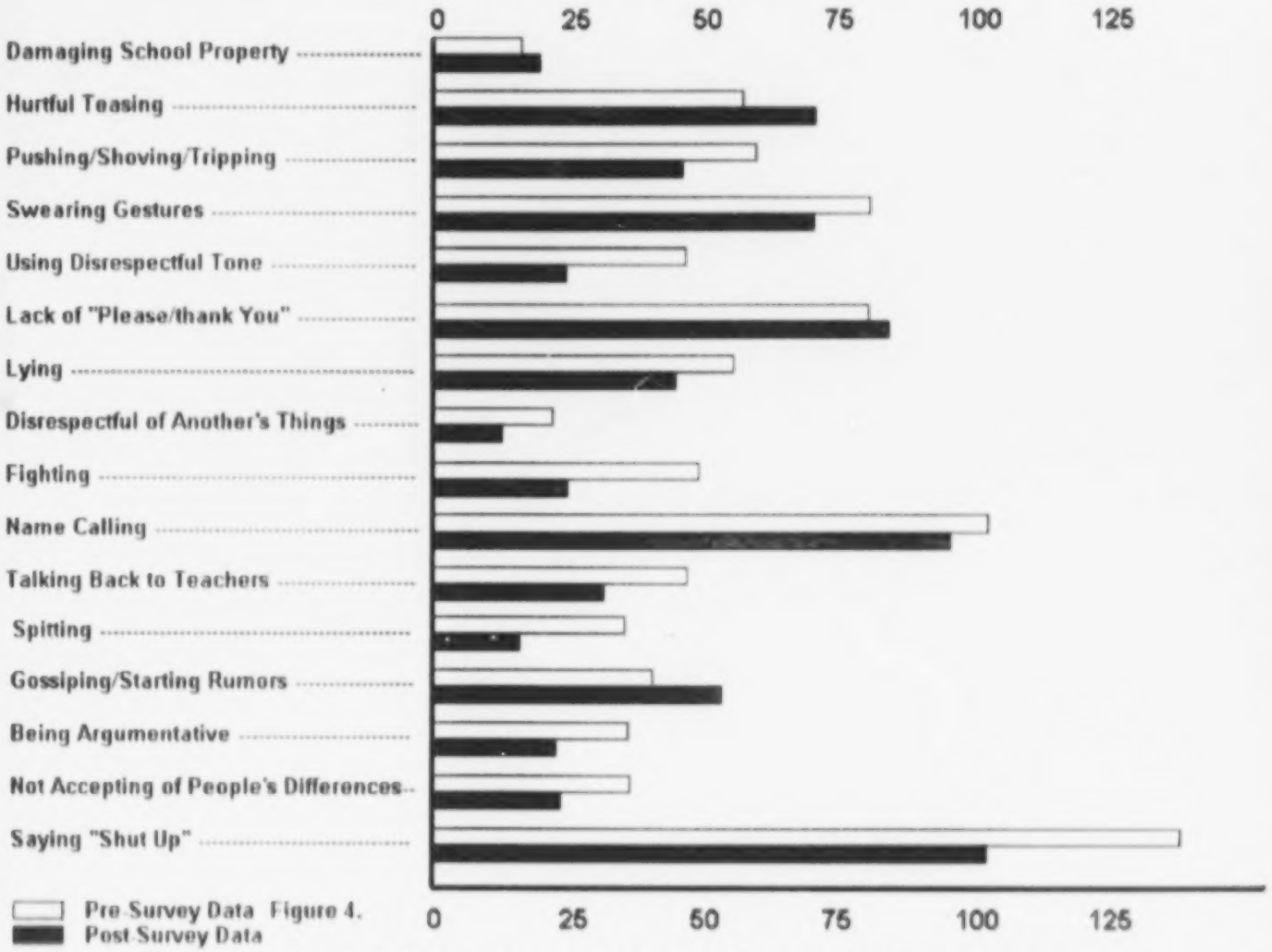

Figure 4. Number of student responses to listed behaviors of which the pupils were a part

Figure 11. Categories and numbers of student responses to student pre-survey Sept 1997 and post-survey Dec 1997

Figure 12 illustrates the post survey results regarding students' perceptions of how student behavior and the noncompliance with school rules is handled by the faculty. When compared to Figure 5, students perceptions remain unchanged.

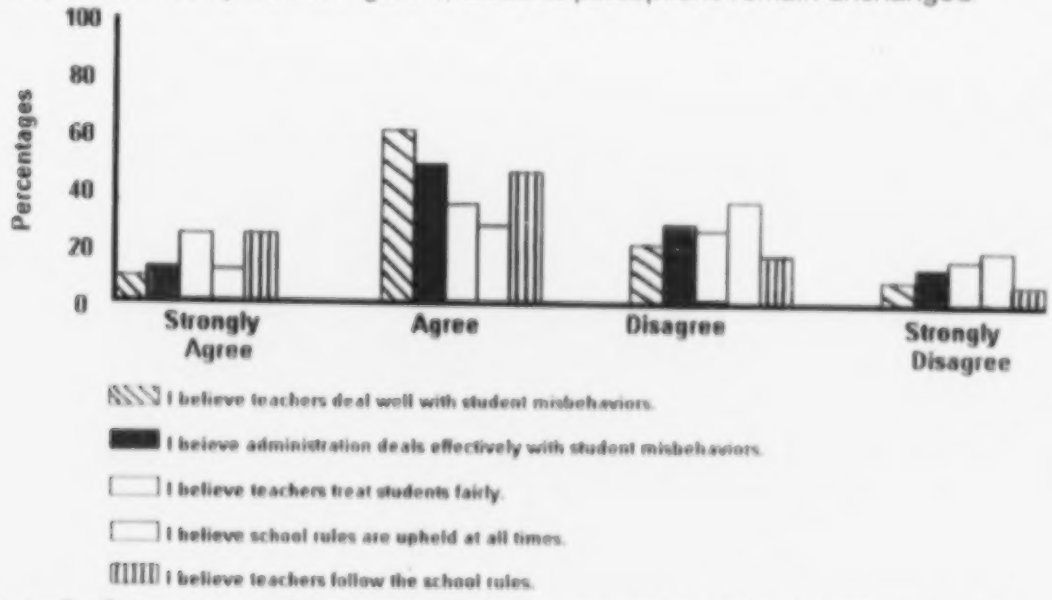

Figure 5. Categories and percentages of student responses to student pre-survey Sept. 1997.

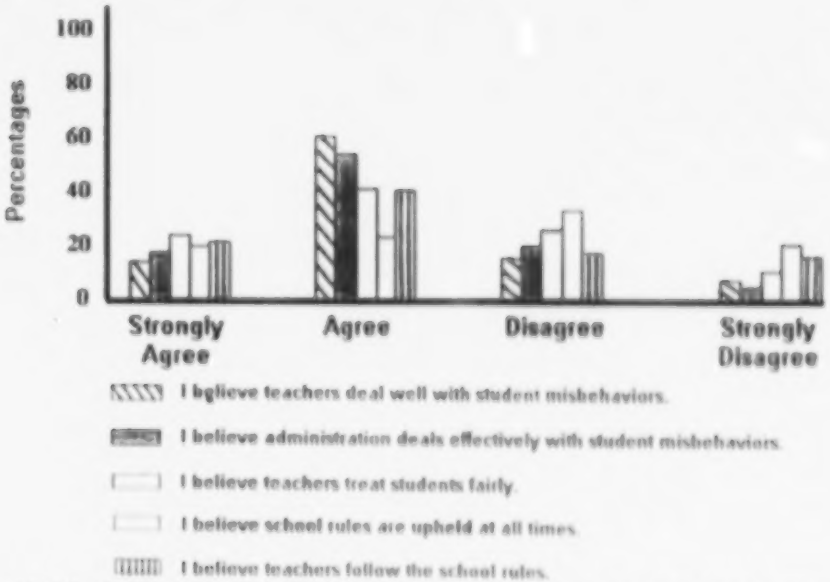

Figure 12. Categories and percentages of student responses to student post-survey Dec. 1997.

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Throughout the intervention each of the five research members used an observation checklist (Appendix G) to tally student misbehaviors two days per week for a total of twelve minutes at specific locations. Observations from the checklists were combined for a weekly total of infractions. Figure 13 illustrates these results. Infractions appeared to be consistent throughout the seventeen week study except for week seven. Upon investigation it was noted that a shortened week prior to a four day weekend, and two afternoon assemblies occurred within that time period. This may explain the increase in disruptive activity.

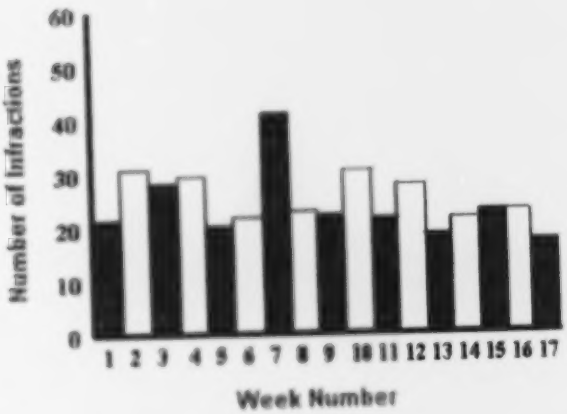

Figure 13. Categories and numbers of student infractions observed weekly at posted observation checklist points Sept. 1997 through Dec. 1997.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on student development and use of prosocial skills, the researchers have come to the following conclusions:

- The direct teaching of prosocial skills improved the overall climate of the targeted middle school.

- The direct instruction of conflict resolution skills coupled with opportunities to practice the learned skills resulted in decreased incidents of physical and verbal conflict.
- Students who previously had little or no concept of empathy gained knowledge and understanding of the importance of tolerance regarding the differences of others.
- The overall level of respect for others' personal property and authority increased.
- While opportunities for cooperative learning were provided in researchers' classrooms, the number of opportunities in the school as a whole were limited.
- Although decreases were made in some areas, researchers still have a level of concern regarding the students' daily use of common courtesies, such as saying please and thank you.

Based on the above findings, the researchers would like to make the following recommendations to future researchers or persons wishing to implement this program.

The researchers recommend this program for the improvement of student prosocial skills. It exposed them to appropriate alternatives for dealing with the conflict situations they face on an ongoing basis. An awareness of and increased sensitivity to the importance of other people's feelings and perceptions was developed.

Students' ability to make wise/appropriate choices increased as they were made aware of acceptable methods of conflict resolution. This, in turn, per the researchers' opinion, increased students' self-esteem as they were able to relate to their peers in a more positive manner.

Suggestions to improve the social skills program are to incorporate an increased number of cooperative activities in all classrooms to provide practice for prosocial skills. An increase in administrative involvement in the conflict resolution process and consistency in usage throughout the school would promote its importance while again providing additional practice for solving problems in a positive manner. In addition, the

initial two week conflict resolution training should be provided during a time other than students' study hall because depriving them of this valuable time can start the program off on a negative note. Be creative and envision opportunities within the established curriculum to incorporate conflict resolution, empathy, and tolerance concepts instead of feeling obligated to create brand new lesson plans. Finally, have the goals of the program firmly in mind, but be flexible in the implementation of them, and take advantage of spontaneous, real-life opportunities as they arise. Future researchers will find taking the time to develop prosocial skills will prove to be a worthwhile undertaking.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Student Survey

***The following questions ask for your opinions on social skills (the manner in which you behave and interact with other people). Please consider each question thoughtfully and answer as honestly as possible. Your name is not required.**

1. Check (✓) the three negative behaviors from the list that you feel occurred most often at school last year.

____Damaging school property
____Hurtful teasing/injuring feelings
____Pushing/shoving/tripping
____Swearing/gestures
____Using a disrespectful tone
____Lack of "please" or "thank you"
____Lying
____Disrespectful of another's property
____Fighting
____Name calling
____Talking back to teachers
____Spitting
____Gossiping/starting rumors
____Being argumentative/difficult
____Not accepting of people's differences
____Saying "Shut up"

____ _____
(other)

2. Check the behaviors of which you were a part last year.

____Damaging school property
____Hurtful teasing/injuring feelings
____Pushing/shoving/tripping
____Swearing/gestures
____Using a disrespectful tone
____Lack of "please" or "thank you"
____Lying
____Disrespectful of another's property
____Fighting
____Name calling
____Talking back to teachers
____Spitting
____Gossiping/starting rumors
____Being argumentative/difficult
____Not accepting of people's differences
____Saying "Shut up"

____ _____
(other)

3. If we were to focus our efforts to improve one social skill, which skill do you feel we should target?

_____

Appendix A (continued)

4. Where do most school misbehaviors occur? (Check three)

____Outside on school grounds before school ____Outside on school grounds after school

____Hallway between classes ____Cafeteria

____Bathroom ____Study Hall

____Teacher classrooms

5. I believe teachers deal well with student misbehaviors.

____Strongly agree ____Agree ____Disagree ____Strongly disagree

6. I believe administration deals effectively with student misbehaviors.

____Stongly agree ____Agree ____Disagree ____Strongly disagree

7. I believe teachers treat students equally.

____Strongly agree ____Agree ____Disagree ____Strongly disagree

8. I believe school rules are upheld at all times.

____Strongly agree ____Agree ____Disagree ____Strongly disagree

9. I believe teachers follow the school rules.

____Strongly agree ____Agree ____Disagree ____Strongly disagree

10. Social skills that I could improve on are

_____

Appendix B
Teacher Survey

*The following questions ask for your opinions on social skills, which is the manner in which one behaves and interacts with other people. Please consider each question thoughtfully, and answer as honestly as possible. Your name is not required.

1. Check the three negative behaviors from the list that you feel occurred most often at school last year.

___ Damaging school property
___ Hurtful teasing/injuring feelings
___ Pushing/shoving/tripping
___ Swearing/gestures
___ Using a disrespectful tone
___ Lack of "please" and "thank you"
___ Lying
___ Disrespectful of another's property
___ Fighting
___ Name calling
___ Talking back to teachers
___ Spitting
___ Gossiping/starting rumors
___ Being argumentative/difficult
___ Not accepting of people's differences
___ Saying "Shut up"
___ _____
(other)

2. If we were to focus our efforts to improve one social skill, which skill do you feel we should target?

_____

3. Where do most school misbehaviors occur? (Check three)
___ Outside on school grounds before school
___ Outside on school grounds after school
___ Hallway between classes
___ Cafeteria
___ Bathroom
___ Study Hall
___ Teacher classrooms

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Appendix C
Conflict Resolution Unit

(Approximately 2 weeks for 1 period per day)

LESSON 1:

Objective: Recognize that conflict is an ever-present part of life and therefore deserves our attention and exploration. Also, students' views will be documented through the survey.

Without mentioning the word "conflict", explain to students that as a class they will be exploring a topic intensely for a few weeks. Thereafter, the topic will be brought up periodically throughout the year to further examine and learn about it. Continue in riddle fashion by assurring students that they are all familiar with the concept and have had experience with it themselves. In fact, their brothers and sisters have experienced it as well as all of their friends. Parents, relatives, ancestors, and even their future children will experience it. Hispanics, Caucasians, African-Americans, Asians, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, wealthy, middle class, the homeless, the famous, and the infamous have experienced it. It exists in the animal world and in the planet itself. It has been around since the beginning of time and will continue to the end of time. What is this hot topic that is so much a part of our existence? Give students a brief opportunity to guess.

Reveal that the topic is conflict. Explain that conflict is any struggle between opposing beings, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or powers. Instruct students to think back on conflicts they have experienced in the past and how they have reacted to or handled it.

Distribute the survey and ask students to keep their conflict experiences in mind when they answer the survey questions and to respond as honestly as possible. Names are unnecessary because our only purpose is to get a flavor of how they all feel about conflict, not who says what. Ideally, students should complete surveys in class, but they may be taken home and brought back the next day if more time is needed.

Appendix C (continued)

Lesson 3:

Objective: Continue exploring yesterday's topic of perception and understand the meaning of conflict and its ramifications.

Review what was discovered yesterday regarding people's perceptions and how they can color people's reactions or opinions about a situation which can lead to conflict. Also, review the lesson learned from "The Wise Men and the Elephant" tale.

Tell students that they will be continuing to practice exploring different perceptions of a given situation instead of jumping to one conclusion. Present students with the following situation: You see a fourteen year old boy lounging in front of the TV. What is the first conclusion you draw about this scene? Give time to respond. Many people would conclude that the teen is lazy. Others may say he is sick. Maybe he's taking a well-deserved rest after cleaning the garage without being asked to do so.

Explain that the more we realize that other people may have different perceptions of the same situation, the more open-minded and understanding we become. We try to see things from someone else's point of view. We may not agree or even like another person's point of view, but the important thing is that we are able to see and understand it. This ability is an important tool to help us deal with conflict.

Distribute the list of situations and have students work in pairs to come up with at least two different perceptions of each.

1. An elderly person sitting alone on a park bench.

2. A teenager who is completely bald.

3. A young woman sitting alone in a restaurant.

4. A group of thirteen year old boys standing in a group outside school.

Appendix C (continued)

5. An eighth grade student selects a seat in the front row on the first day of class.

6. A seventh grader with sloppy handwriting.

7. A seven year old with dirty hands, face, and grass-stained jeans

8. A twelve year old slipping packages of Twinkies beneath his jacket in a convenience store.

After about ten minutes, select a few to share aloud. Ask students what message about dealing with conflict this activity has left them with.

Appendix C (continued)

Name/How_____

POINT OF VIEW

Read the following situations and think of at least two perceptions of each. The first is done for you. Feel free to skip around instead of answering each in order.

1. *An elderly person sitting alone on a park bench*
   - Lonely, no friends
   - Waiting for a friend
   - Babysitting grandchildren playing at a distance
   - Lost
   - Enjoying peace + quiet

2. *A teenager who is completely bald*

3. *A young woman sitting alone in a restaurant*

4. *A group of thirteen year old boys standing in a group outside school*

5. *An eighth grade student selects a seat in the front row on the first day of class*

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Appendix C (continued)

6. A seventh grader with dirty hands, face, and grass-stained jeans

7. A sixth grader with sloppy handwriting

8. A twelve year old slipping packages of Twinkies beneath his jacket in a convenience store

9. A man is seen running at top speed at 10:30 p.m. down an alley behind a row of houses

Appendix C (continued)

Lesson 6

Objective: Understand how the eight step resolution method works through a selection of scenarios.

Review the eight steps for fighting fair. Distribute page one which sets up a conflict situation. Read aloud. Have students state the conflict.

Distribute scenarios one and two. After having students read the first one silently, ask if anyone has experienced or witnessed such a conflict. Ask students to point out mistakes the characters made. (Trying to argue in a busy place. name calling, too angry to discuss but kept on going, etc.) Ask what the result of the episode was and whether it was satisfactory.

Have students read scenario two and ask how the eight steps were used effectively. (Waited for Zoe to cool off, chose a quiet place to talk, Sam stayed calm and wasn't rushing to defend herself, Sam used humor to smooth things over, etc.)

Appendix C (continued)

The Case of the Blabber Mouth

Zoe and Samantha were very close friends. They often shared their secrets knowing they could trust each other. At a sleep-over one night Zoe revealed to Samantha that she had a crush on Joe, a new student in her math class. Her shyness prevented her from approaching him and starting a conversation. She confided in Samantha that she wished Joe would notice her and maybe ask her out.

Samantha, who was bolder than her friend, saw Joe in the library a few days later. She could see why Zoe liked him. She noticed that Alex, her cousin, was sitting next to Joe, and it looked as if they had become friends. Between classes she found Alex and asked him about Joe. He said that they had been assigned partners for a science project and he seemed like a good guy. Samantha told Alex that Zoe had a crush on Joe but was too shy to do anything about it.

The following day while Zoe was sitting in math class, she felt a tap on her shoulder. When she turned around, a folded note was passed to her. She opened it up and read, "Hey Zoe, how's Joe?" Little hearts and flowers were drawn all over the paper. Her heart skipped a beat and she could feel her face start to turn red. Behind her she could hear a snicker, and when she turned her head, she saw that three girls in the back of the room were grinning at her. She glanced in Joe's direction in one of the front rows and saw him concentrating on what the teacher was saying. She wondered if he knew, too. She sank down in her chair and glared at her notebook.

When the bell rang, Zoe hurried out of class toward the cafeteria where she and Samantha always met for lunch. She saw her friend waiting there as usual and stormed up to her. "How could you?" she fumed. "How could you tell?"

"What? What are you talking about?" Samantha said, startled at Zoe's words.

"You told, you . . . you blabber mouth!" she hissed. "I trusted you not to tell anyone about Joe. The whole school probably knows by now!"

Before Samantha could answer, Zoe had turned and was walking down the hall in tears.

Appendix C (continued)

Resolution Scenario #1

Zoe caught up with Samantha and tried to explain. Other students pushed by them as they made their way to lunch or study hall. Some paused in curiosity as they argued.

"Look, I was only trying to help," said Samantha.

"Well, you didn't," snapped Zoe. "I should have never told you. . . blabber mouth!"

"Okay, you can stop calling me that now," Zoe snapped back. She was getting a bit irritated herself. This is what I get for going out of my way to help? she asked silently.

"Oh really? What else do you call a person who can't keep a secret, can't keep her mouth shut? Definitely not a friend!"

By this time the hall had become so crowded and bustling the two couldn't help but be swept with the flow of traffic.

Samantha tried again to explain, "I just thought . . ."

"You didn't think. That's the prob. . ." interrupted Zoe.

". . . that if I told Alex that you liked . . ." continued Samantha.

"You told Alex? Alex knows? Holy hotline, Sam! What were you thinking?!" scolded Zoe and off she went, angrily weaving her way through the crowd away from Samantha, her best friend.

"Hey, you should be happy I said something! You never would make a move!" she yelled in a last ditch effort to defend herself. Samantha wasn't prepared for the hurt look on Zoe's face before she disappeared in the crowd.

Appendix C (continued)

Resolution Scenario #2

Zoe caught up with Samantha and tried to explain. Other students pushed by them they made their way to lunch or study hall. Some paused in curiosity as they argued.

"Look, I was only trying to help," said Samantha.

"Well, you didn't," snapped Zoe. "I should have never told you. . . blabber mouth!"

"I know you're mad, but let's talk about this," said Samantha as she searched for a nearby restroom. Maybe they could discuss this in private, she thought.

"Forget it!" snapped Zoe.

"Okay look, I'll meet you after school on the front steps. I can explain what happened if you give me a chance," said Samantha calmly.

Zoe hesitated. A bit of the ragged edge of anger was smoothed. She was mad, but she knew Sam wouldn't hurt her on purpose. "Maybe I'll be there," replied Zoe and walked away in a huff.

By the time 3:00 p.m. rolled around, Zoe had time to think about it. Samantha was her best friend and she didn't want to stay mad. When the bell rang, she met Samantha on the front steps. She only had a few minutes to talk before her bus would leave.

"Thanks, Zoe," Samantha said, relieved for the chance to explain. "I told Alex about Joe because I thought maybe he could introduce you two, you know, to get the ball rolling. I don't know why Alex told anyone else. I just told because I thought I was helping you."

"You shouldn't have said anything, Sam. I told you something private, and friends are supposed to keep secrets. I feel like I can't trust you anymore. You should've asked me if you could tell Alex," Zoe explained, feeling much better after hearing the reason behind Samantha's actions. "I know you were just trying to help, but next time let me in on it, will you?" she teased and playfully elbowed her in the shoulder.

"I don't blame you for having been upset, Zoe. I didn't expect it to turn out the way it did. Anyway, you can still trust me. I haven't told anyone you can't sleep without your stuffed hippo, have I?" she laughed and elbowed Zoe back.

The line of buses began to pull away from the curb when Zoe ran across the lawn, knocked on one of the doors, and disappeared inside, but not before waving at Samantha, her best friend.

Lesson 7

Objective: Review and practice fighting fair rules and revisit different perceptions concept.

Review the fighting fair rules. Explain that yesterday the situation was set up and the resolution was figured out for them. Today they're going to be able to role play the resolutions based on a selected situation.

Ask for two volunteers to act out the following scene and continue playing it out so that the conflict is resolved.

> Ray borrowed Will's motorcycle magazine yesterday and returned it today in bad shape. It had been rolled into a tube, the cover was wrinkled, and a light brown stain covered the last three pages from where Ray had spilled a Coke. Will just bought the last magazine on the stand two days ago and didn't even get to read through it all himself.

> James is trying to focus on what Mr. Thompson, the history teacher, is saying about what's going to be on the test the next day. In the seat behind him, Sarah keeps whispering and making annoying noises, ones that only he and a few others can hear. Obviously, she's not concerned about the upcoming test, but James's uncle promised him tickets to the Bulls game if he pulls an A in history.

> Corey dreads going to his locker each day because Jeff slams his door into Corey's and takes up all the room in the already close quarters. Jeff takes his sweet time and sometimes Corey is late for class.

Now, introduce the "Late Arriver" activity, which focuses on a person's perception of a situation based on his limited or incomplete

knowledge of a situation.

Read the story of the broken window to students while they listen. Ask them to (1) explain what the owner of the house thinks and how he feels, (2) what the police think, and (3) what the children think and how they feel. The discussion should emphasize the lack of knowledge of the owner compared to the more extensive knowledge of the children. Explain that conflict often arises unnecessarily or is more intense simply because someone jumps to conclusions and doesn't wait for all the facts. It's important to listen to all sides of the story before making judgements.

Now, before reading the second story, ask for a volunteer to leave the room for a minute. Read the first part of the story to the class, then have the volunteer come back in and read the second half to everyone. Ask the volunteer what he thought of Mark and why. The late arriver is illustrating what happens to our perception if we don't know all the facts. Have another reveal to the volunteer the information he didn't hear and see if his perception changes in any way.

Repeat the "late arriver" process with a third story and discuss the differences in perception.

Appendix C (continued)

Broken Window

A group of children is playing ball in the street. Their ball accidentally breaks a neighbor's window. The children run to the window to look over the damage. They ring the front doorbell, but no one answers. They remember that the man who lives there usually doesn't get home from work until 6 p.m. One boy says, "That gives us 2 hours to get the money together to pay for a new window. Let's split up and meet back here at 6 p.m. with as much money as we can get together." The children run off.

The owner of the house drives into his driveway earlier than usual. He is furious when he sees the broken window. He calls the police to investigate. The police arrive just as the boys come back to the house. In the last scene, the owner of the broken window is pointing angrily to the approaching boys.

Appendix C (continued)

Mark bought a model of a Viking sailing vessel with money he was given for his birthday. He enjoyed spending hours putting models of all kinds together, and he had quite an impressive collection. On a rainy Saturday afternoon he was sitting at the dining room table working on the ship. All the pieces were organized and spread out on the table. He had finished over half the project and was installing the delicate, tall masts when his older brother Mike came into the kitchen with a friend. He was dribbling a basketball and passed it to his friend who missed catching it. The ball hit the table scattering pieces of the model everywhere and knocking the ship's masts from Mark's hands. The older boys left the kitchen and went outside without looking back.

Enter Later Arriver

Mark walked upstairs to his bedroom and saw Max, his five year old brother, building a tall windmill with his Tinker Toys. He had been working on it over an hour and had just gotten the big wheel to turn without falling apart. Mark walked in, picked up a large stuffed toy off his little brother's bed and hurled it at the windmill, breaking it into pieces. Mark left the room with Max wondering why Mark wrecked his Tinker Toy windmill.

Discuss:

1. What is the late arriver's perception of Mark?
2. What is the perception of those who know all the facts?

Late Arriver (Story 3)

Brian and Claudia had been dating for six months. They met before school, ate lunch together, and when Brian didn't have football practice and Claudia didn't have karate class, they walked the mile and a half trek home together. They would often stop at Nick's Place for ice cream. Brian usually chose a different flavor

each time, but Claudia always, always ordered peaches and cream ice cream. The twosome looked forward to these times when they could be alone, relax, and talk.

One day Claudia told Brian that her dad had been transferred to another state and that they would be moving as soon as they could sell their house. It only took a month to do so, and the two had to say good-bye.

Enter Late Arriver

Brian came home alone from school, set the table for his mom, and sat down to dinner with the rest of his family. His mom had gotten off early from work and was pleased to announce that she had had time to prepare the family's favoite meal, lasagna with her special meat sauce. To top it off, there was to be peaches and cream ice cream for dessert. Brian hung his head and stared at his plate. Then he pushed himself away from the table and mumbled that he wasn't hungry. He trudged down the hall to his room and slammed the door, leaving everyone at the table to wonder what was wrong.

Discuss:

1. What is the late arriver's perception of Brian?
2. What is the perception of everyone who knows all the facts?

Finally, ask students to explain what the point of the "late arriver" activities was and how they can relate this to their own lives.

Lesson 9

Objective: Students will reflect on the words of Martin Luther King and practice role playing conflict situations incorporating the eight steps learned earlier.

Appendix C (continued)

Distribute students' file folders with journal entry papers in them. Post the first quotation on an overhead and have students read it silently. Have students skip a line after their last entry, date it, and explain what they think the quote means. Share and discuss. Do the same with the second quote.

Review the eight step method for fighting fair and ask volunteers to role play the following situations. Possibly have them demonstrate the typical way of fighting unfairly, and them do again the correct way.

Jose and three of his friends sit at a cafeteria table talking and laughing. A new student named Roy sits down at the table, too, but is ignored by the boys. Roy tries to join in their conversation, but the boys give him the cold shoulder. Roy picks up a ketchup packet and tears the end intending to put some on his burger, but the ketchup squirts out and splatters Jose's shirt. Jose yells at him and gives him a shove. Roy pushes back.

Marty sits in English class and glances out a nearby window which overlook the school grounds. He sees a kid sitting on his younger brother's bike which he just got for a birthday present a month earlier. The boy then takes it for a spin up and down the sidewalk a few times while he waits for his mom to pick him up for a dentist's appointment. After school Marty sees the same guy walking toward the bike rack again. He jogs across the lawn to catch up with the kid.

Your family has just finished dinner. Your brother is watching TV, your sister has begun her homework, and you're on the telephone. Suddenly, your mom explodes, "How come all of you become busy when it's time to do the dishes? Every night it's the same old story!" You respond angrily, "From the minute you get home from work, you start picking on me!"

After role playing is finished, have students explain how taking time to see another person's perception could help in resolving the conflicts.

Appendix D
Lesson Plan

Teaching Cooperative Social Skills
Positive Discipline- Lesson # 2

Thinking Skills: Visual Recall, Multi-Sensory Imagery

Target Social Skills: Communication and Cooperation

Activity Name: See-Run-Do Posters

- Note: This is an activity that combines several kinds of thinking and stimulates several learning styles. See-Run-Do posters require integration of visual/kinesthetic thinking with strong communication skills. It is a flexible activity that can easily be adapted to fit different grade levels or subject areas. Best of all, it's a lot of fun!

Task Focus: Each team will construct a poster that look like the teacher's sample poster.
Product: Completed poster
Materials: Markers, scissors, glue, tape, construction paper, newspaper, yarn and various collage materials.
Teacher Pre-activity: Construct a sample See-Run-Do poster. As the students I work with are currently completing a multidisciplinary unit based upon the theme of multiculturalism, I will utilize this as my theme. Please see the attached sample.

Hang the sample poster outside the classroom and cover it so that students will not see it as they enter the room.

Organize the materials needed for the construction of the poster so that the student teams have equal access to them. I usually organize everything on a large table at the front of the room.

Procedure:

1. As a whole class, construct a web by writing the word "communication" in the center and asking students what words, thoughts or ideas they associate with the word. Use the list to construct a T-chart in which a contrast between "good" communication skills and "poor" communication skills is made. Reinforce the concept that communication cannot take place without active listening.

2. Assign teams of five to six students. Ask each team to select two people they feel are good communicators based upon the previous activity. One of the students will be the "runner" and the other will be the "describer". The rest of the students will be the poster makers.

Appendix D (continued)

3. Explain the student roles:

- The describer will remain outside of the room until the activity is completed. Only the describer will see the teacher poster. After viewing the poster, the describer moves away from the poster to a pre-determined spot also outside the classroom to talk to the runner. He/she describes the poster, a few details at a time. The runner will then relay this information to the poster makers and the describer may then look at the poster again.

- The runner will return to the classroom after obtaining information from the describer. Relying upon visual memory, he needs to relay an accurate description to the poster makers. The runner may make as many trips to communicate with the describer and his/her poster-making teammates, but at no time is he/she allowed to touch the group materials or use his/her hands in anyway (cannot "talk with one's hands).

- Poster makers will construct the poster based upon the information they are given. It is helpful to have one person be in charge of gathering materials as they are needed.

4. Set a time limit of 20 minutes for this activity.

Follow-Up Activity:

1. After time expires, gather all the describers, runners, and poster makers together.

2. Compare and contrast the posters from each team with the sample poster.

3. Process the activity by asking the students to reflect on their feelings about it. Some questions to consider are:

    - How did the runners communicate without using their hands?
    - Was it easier being the describer, runner or poster makers?
    - How did the time limit affect the activity?
    - Teams should share their response with the entire class,

4. Display the posters in the room.

Transfer:

The communicative arts are tools for thinking and learning in all content subjects. The communicative art of visual literacy is sometimes forgotten and this activity helps all of the team members build upon this skill while strengthening their speaking and listening skills.

Appendix E
Student Product of "One Good Thing"

Danielle,

As you'll recall, earlier in the year we did an activity in which students wrote a positive comment about every other student in their class. The following is a list made up of all the positive comments about you. I hope that you will save this list and look at it from time to time, especially when things may not be going your way. It's a reminder of your good qualities that the people around you notice.

You are a good flute player.
She is very polite to everyone.
She is pretty and has many friends.
Danielle is a nice person.
She is smart and never mean to me.
Her hair is pretty.
Danielle is the best person to have as a friend.
She always listens to everyone.
Danielle is cool and always nice.
Danielle gives people helpful advice.
She is a good person. She is always smiling and never mad.
Danielle has pretty hair and eyes. She can cheer people up that are feeling down.
Danielle is polite and kind. That is why we are great friends.
She is the quietest and nicest person in the seventh grade.
She helps me with homework I do not understand.
She is a person that is quiet, nice, and good looking.
Danielle is nice because I never hear her put anyone down.
She is pretty.
She is nice and really organized.
Danielle is nice, sweet, a good friend, fun to do things with, and trustworthy.
She is good in math.
She plays the flute beautifully.
She has intelligence and beauty.
Danielle is a good basketball player.
She is always there when I don't understand something.
She is pretty, nice, and always smiling.

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Appendix F
Lesson Plan

PREPARING TO READ

Lesson Plans For: "The Moves Make the Man"

Thinking Skills: Speculate, imagine, evaluate

Social Skills: Think-Pair-Square-Share, taking turns, listening

Content Focus: Theme: "Things are not always as they seem."
Discussion of how our perceptions due to preconceived ideas, misinformation or lack of information can lead to incorrect or inaccurate assumptions.

Integrated Curriculum: Social Studies (antique items)

Materials: Antique objects (hide scraper, hair curler, pleat crimper), handouts, transparency of chart

Task Focus: Students will speculate about what each item is, who would use it and for what purpose

Product: Completed chart (modified Who-What-Where-When-Why chart)

Activity:

1. Pair students and pass out charts
2. Show entire class the different antique objects/ Pass objects around for all to touch and examine
3. Students should work in pairs to complete the chart. They are to speculate what they think the object is, who they think would use it and how the object would be used.
4. Pairs will then share and compare their charts with another pair of students
5. As a whole we will share the contents of the charts
6. Explain the what each object is, who would use it and for what purpose
7. Explain how our answers be they correct or incorrect have much to do with our prior knowledge (be it correct, incorrect or nonexistent)
8. Ask, "Imagine you were starting a new job and handed such an object and told, 'Get to work.' How would you feel if you were not sure what to do with the tool? Would you act like you knew what you were doing or would you ask for help? What if you were too proud or simply to shy to ask about the tool?" Ask the students to share their responses with their partner
9. Explain that the short story we are about to read has much to do with misconceptions, preconceived ideas and pride.

Appendix F (continued)

Object	What is it?	Who would use it?	For what purpose?
Object # 1			
Object # 2			
Object # 3			

Appendix F (continued)

DURING THE READING

Lesson Plans For: "The Moves Make the Man"

During Reading: DLTA

Thinking Skills: Evaluation, Speculation

Social Skills: Wrap-A-Round, Taking turns

Content Focus: Reading/ listening comprehension

Materials: Handout, Post-it-Notes (mini ones), transparency of story and chart

Task Focus: Students will list and evaluate the various judgments made by the main character during the course of the story.

Product: Completed handout

Activity:

1. Students will continue to focus on the theme that our judgments about people and situations may not always be accurate. "Things are not always as they seem."
2. Explain that during the course of the story Jerome, the main character, makes judgments about his Home Economics class as well as the people in the class. We need to identify his judgments, what his bases those judgments upon and then whether his judgment prove to be valid or invalid.
3. Read the story aloud to students
4. If they find a "judgment" or "reason" for Jerome they should use a Post-it note labeled as either "judgment" or "reason" to mark the selection they feel exemplifies either the judgment or the reasoning behind Jerome's thoughts
5. Model several examples by using a transparency of the story and Post-its
5. After the story has been completed students should work in pairs to compare their thoughts and marked selection in order to complete the chart
6. Discuss as a Wrap-A-Round whether or not Jerome's judgments proved to be correct or incorrect

Appendix F (continued)

"The Moves Make the Man"

Jerome makes a number of judgments during the course of this story. As readers it is our job to understand the main character and see what make him who he is. In the chart below you should try to list as many of the judgments that Jerome makes along with the reason behind his judgments. These judgments really amount to the way Jerome sees and feels about the world and people around him.

Judgment (include page #)	Reason behind judgment (pg. #)

Appendix F (continued)

Now, let's take a look at the judgments that Jerome made? Select any three you have listed above and decide: 1) Was the judgment correct or incorrect? Explain your answer.

2) How did Jerome's past (his prior knowledge) help or hinder him in his decision making?

Is the judgment correct? Incorrect?	Prior knowledge help? Hinder? Why?

Appendix F (continued)

AFTER THE READING
Activity # 1:
Lesson Plans For: "The Moves Make the Man"

Thinking Skills: Speculate, Create, Evaluate

Social Skills: Wrap-A-Round, Taking turns

Content Focus: Language Arts, metaphor

Materials: Newsprint, markers, handout

Task Focus: Students will create and share metaphor for various menu items

Product: Creative menu

Activity:

1. Divide students into cooperative groups of four
2. Review metaphor and handout
3. Share example of creative menu
4. Students will create their own menu (Illustrate and create names for items)
5. Students will share their menus with the class.

Activity # 2:
Thinking Skills: Meta-affection

Content Focus: Revisiting and personal reflection upon the theme.

Material: Student journals

Task Focus: Students are to reflect upon a time when they misjudged or were misjudged a situation or person.

Product: Completed journal entry

Activity:

1. Student will be given approximately 10 minute to complete a journal entry. Students will reflect in their journals upon the following question:

Think about a time when you were misjudged or when you misjudged either a person or a situation. What do you think lead to the misjudgment? How did you feel about being misjudged or misjudging a situation or another person? What did you learn from the incident?

Appendix F (continued)

AFTER THE READING
Activity # 1: (Integration of Language Arts)
Lesson Plans For: "The Moves Make the Man"

Thinking Skills: Speculate, Create, Evaluate

Social Skills: Wrap-A-Round, Taking turns

Content Focus: Language Arts, metaphor

Materials: Newsprint, markers, handout

Task Focus: Students will create and share metaphor for various menu items

Product: Creative menu

Activity:

1. Divide students into cooperative groups of four
2. Review metaphor and handout
3. Share example of creative menu
4. Students will create their own menu (Illustrate and create names for items)
5. Students will share their menus with the class.

Activity # 2: (Integration of Language Arts)
Thinking Skills: Meta-affection

Content Focus: Revisiting and personal reflection upon the theme.

Material: Student journals

Task Focus: Students are to reflect upon a time when they misjudged or were misjudged a situation or person.

Product: Completed journal entry

Activity:

1. Student will be given approximately 10 minute to complete a journal entry. Students will reflect in their journals upon the following question:

Think about a time when you were misjudged or when you misjudged either a person or a situation. What do you think lead to the misjudgment? How did you feel about being misjudged or misjudging a situation or another person? What did you learn from the incident?

Appendix F (continued)

The author of this story created a unique voice for Jerome. It is the voice of a young African-American teenage boy of the 1960s. One of the techniques the author uses is to scatter slang liberally throughout Jerome's narrative.

Slang is nonstandard speech that usually originates in a subgroup. Most slang is usually popular for a brief period. A writer may use it to place a character in a certain time period, or as a member of a particular group.

Some occupations have their own slang. Restaurant workers often use colorful slang expressions to identify food orders. These slang terms are often metaphors for various food items.

Some examples are:

Draw one up= "a cup of coffee"
Wreck 'em= scrambled eggs
Squeeze one= orange juice
oinks and clucks= bacon and eggs

Imagine that you are short order cooks. Make up slang name for some of your favorite dishes and create a menu. See how creative you can be. Use the newsprint to illustrate and identify your creations. We will share our menus as a class.

Appendix G
Observation Checklist

Teacher Observation List for Inappropriate Behaviors

Location_____ Date_____ Minutes_____

Argumentative/difficult

_____

Damage/disrespect to school/another's property

_____

Disrespectful tone/insubordination

_____

Hurtful teasing/injuring feelings/name calling

_____

Interrupting

_____

Lack of "please" or "thank you"

_____

Pushing/shoving/tripping

_____

"Shut up"

_____

_____
(Observer)